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Paul Strong
52 Stapleford Close
Chelmsford
Essex
CM2 0RB

12 January 2001

Dear Paul

I write further to my letter dated 5 January 2001. This was sent to you by recorded delivery. I have attached a copy for your reference.

I have continued to try and contact you on your home telephone number: 01245 263997 and have been advised by BT that this is no longer a customer number. Please confirm your current home telephone number for our records.

You have not been in to work since 14 December 2000 for what appears to be a number of different reasons. You had pre-booked 15 December as holiday but it was not until 18 December itself that your wife telephoned to say that you were taking that day as holiday. She did the same thing on 19 December 2000. On 20 December 2000 we had no contact from you or anyone on your behalf. On 21 December 2000 you e-mailed Simon Davidson to ask for the whole of the week of the 18th to 22nd December to be treated as holiday because your wife was very ill. We did not then hear from you on 27, 28, 29 December 2000 or on 2, 3 or 4 January 2001. We were then advised by your wife by telephone on Friday, 5 January 2001 that you had flu and that you would be in the office on Monday 8 January 2001. You did not come into work on that day and again we had no contact from you or anyone on your behalf explaining your absence until our telephone conversation yesterday in which you said that you still had flu and would be in to work on Monday 15 January 2001 and would bring with you a doctor's certificate covering your absence.

I would add that this prolonged absence is in the context of your absence from 5 to 30 October and three periods of absence each lasting three days being 22 to 24 November, 29 November to 1 December and 6 to 8 December 2000.

EXHIBIT B.



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I would like to refer you to your Terms and Conditions of employment, specifically clauses 9.1 to 9.7 which set out the sickness leave procedures. You will note that under clause 9.5.3 repetition of failure to comply with the sickness notification procedures may result in disciplinary action. The purpose of the procedures is to enable us to comply with statutory sick pay procedures and to make arrangements to cover your position. These procedures were drawn to your attention in October 2000 when you had previously failed to comply with them. During your absence since 14 December 2000 you have again failed to follow these procedures which has been disrupting for the company.

As a result of your absences we are concerned both about the state of your health, the effect of your absence on the company and the lack of proper communication with us over this period. I think that it would therefore be helpful if we met on your return to work on Monday 15 January 2001 to discuss the reasons for your recent absences and your failure to follow the correct procedures.

I look forward to seeing you on Monday.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Debbie Evans'.

Debbie Evans

Human Resources Assistant

For and on behalf of

Lorna Buckland, Human Resources Manager

By post and courier : 12 January 2001